

THE  
BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

VOL. XXXI. WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21, 1844.

No. 3.

OBSERVATIONS ON EQUIVOCAL GENERATION.

[ONE of the papers in the last volume of the Transactions of the New York State Medical Society, is by Dr. T. W. Blatchford, on the subject of equivocal generation. Dr. B. was subpoenaed, in 1836, as a witness in a case of slander, and was requested to prepare written testimony on the question, "Is it possible for a woman to become pregnant by a dog, and to bring forth pups or any other issue as the result of such unnatural intercourse?" The slander was proved, and the defence offered to show the impossibility of issue from the connection specified. The plaintiff's counsel, however, conceded the fact, and the witnesses were discharged without testifying. Dr. B.'s testimony is therefore first published as above stated.]

The subject of Generation is one of deep interest and of great obscurity. While, however, there is much concerning it which is still enveloped in mystery, science, in her steady and majestic march, has shed light upon many of its processes which at one time were considered hopelessly impenetrable. How much higher she may raise the veil to let us see what yet lurks behind, is impossible for us to determine.

We learn from the account given by Moses of the creation, that each plant and each animal throughout the whole extent of organic nature, at the time of their creation, received a command to "bring forth his seed after his kind which was in himself;" and then follows the evidence that the command was obeyed, "and it was so." And it is a fact worthy of observation, that all the investigations of naturalists from the most remote to the latest period, tend only to give additional proof that this LAW is still universally obeyed.

We find every plant and every animal which are furnished with organs for procreation (and this embraces almost the entire range), have a certain set of organs exactly adapted to the end designed, called the male and female organs of generation—the male to secrete and deposit *in propria persona et in propria situ*, a peculiar substance unlike that of any other species of organic matter, and the female to receive and nourish and bring forth the fruit of their united efforts—the union of any other organs or matter than those of the same species being ineffectual to this end. "The congress of the sexes," says Bostock, "attended with the entrance of the male, takes place only in the two first classes of the vertebrated animals; in the amphibia there is the congress without

the entrance, while in fishes there is neither congress nor entrance."—  
*Vol. III., p. 12.*

In searching deeper into these arcana, we find these organs arranged under four different combinations:—1st. The male and the female existing in separate individuals, the congress of which is essential to the propagation of the species, which, I need scarcely say, is the case with the human family, and with most animals with which we are acquainted. 2d. The male and the female existing in the same individual, and possessing the property of impregnating themselves; which combination obtains among most of the vegetable kingdom; it is likewise the same with clams and oysters, and some species of worms. 3d. The male and the female likewise in the same individual, but not possessing the power to impregnate themselves. Here it is rendered necessary that two individuals should mutually impregnate each other, the male organs of one being brought in coaptation with the female organs of the other, and *vice versa*, and thus each individual brings forth its own young. This is the case with the common angleworm, the garden snail, and many other small animals. 4th. Upon the authority of Sennebier and others, where three individuals are essential to the process of generation, one secreting the sperm, another applying it, and the third bringing it forth. This arrangement of the organs of generation, as far as researches have yet proceeded, occurs only among some few of the tribes of insects.

The fecundating dust, as the secretion from the male organs of generation of all vegetables is called, of thousands of plants mingle together in the atmosphere which surrounds both the mountain and the plain; but unless the female to which the species is peculiarly adapted is present, in vain is the fecundating dust sent forth, the reproduction cannot be effected by the female of any other species. A notable instance of this we have in the *populus dilatata*, or common Lombardy poplar. It is a native of Italy. The tree containing the male organs of generation only has been brought into this part of the country, and notwithstanding there is near a dozen species of this genus in almost every forest, yet because the female of its own particular species is not present, it has never produced seed, and naturalists predict that as every tree has its particular age allotted to it, and as this tree has thus far been only propagated by cuttings, which of course are merely branches of the parent stalk, and not a new germ in itself, whenever they shall reach to their good old age, they will all die together; and they certainly now look very much as if they had reached the confines of decrepitude. Upon the authority of the late Dr. Hosack, we learn that a gentleman at the south, taking pity upon their languishing condition, a few years since imported the female tree from Europe, and that now in that part of the country they bear seed after their kind, and are there seen clothed in all their pristine beauty.

In the animal kingdom, a great class of fishes, the female of which deposits its eggs in the water, through which the male afterwards passes, imparting to the water seminal fluid sufficient to fecundate them, thus bring forth their kind; and although there are a vast variety of fish com-

mingling in the same stream, the peculiar sperm suited to each kind, and that alone, possesses the requisite power to impregnate.

The higher we ascend in the scale of being the more evident does the fulfilment of this law, this great fundamental law of nature, become; and we cannot too highly admire this wise and wonderful provision of the great Creator. For could it be otherwise, we might truly say, in the language of the Epicurean poet Lucretius, who wrote earlier than Virgil:

"Thence would arise  
Vast monsters, nature's great absurdities;  
Something half beast, half man, and some would grow  
Tall trees above, and animals below:  
Some joined of fish and beast, and everywhere  
Frightful chimeras breathing flame appear.  
But since we see no such, and things arise  
From certain seeds of certain shape and size,  
And keep their kind as they increase and grow,  
There's some fix'd reason why it should be so."

If the theory of generation, which, among a multiplicity of others, seems to be the favorite among the learned of the present day, be the true explanation of the process, it must forever settle the question of accidental or equivocal generation. About the middle of the seventeenth century, Hamme, Leuwenhoek and Hartsoeker, three celebrated Swiss naturalists, within a short time of each other discovered, by the help of powerful magnifying glasses, myriads of minute animalcules in the sperm of animals, so small that it is affirmed fifty thousand of them united would not equal in bulk one grain of sand. They are not present in the sperm until after the age of puberty, nor after the individual, either from disease, or age, becomes impotent. They are of every possible variety of form, differing according as the species of animals vary, but always and uniformly precisely the same in all animals of the same species; so much so as to be capable of determining the species of animal which furnished the sperm, and of course that the uterus of the female is exactly adapted to the germ of its own particular species. The ingenious experiments of these naturalists, and especially those of Leuwenhoek of Geneva, have been amply and repeatedly confirmed by MM. Provost, Dumas, Blumenbach, Spallanzani, and a host of others.

It may however be said, that the fact of *hybridous productions*, or cross breeds as they are sometimes improperly called, may be opposed to the existence of this general law, which I am endeavoring to trace. With respect to these, however, as far as it concerns the animal kingdom (and I believe it holds good also in the vegetable kingdom), it is known that they cannot be produced except between two individuals of the same species, and even in these few instances it seems to be the concurrent opinion of naturalists generally that they must first be domesticated, for in a state of nature these productions are not known. Besides their domestication, there must be an exact agreement in three essential particulars.

1. Both species must possess organs of generation exactly alike.
2. The time they go with young must be the same.
3. They must agree in their manner of copulation.

Hybrids among animals occur only in a very few classes. There is that of the horse and ass kind, but here we find the female ass and the mare furnished with organs of generation precisely similar, their period of gestation is the same, being a little over eleven months, and so is their manner of copulating; thus there is a concurrence of these three important particulars, essential to pregnancy in cross breeds. The same similarity occurs between the male organs of generation in the jack and the stud as occurs between those of the females of the same species. But here a circumstance should be mentioned which shows very strongly the antiphysical nature of such abnormal productions. The hybrids of these animals never possess the power of reproduction; although, as far as the investigations of the anatomist can ascertain, they are furnished with all the necessary organs of generation, and the male mule is vastly more lecherous than either the jack or the stud. Aristotle, however, a celebrated ancient philosopher, contended that the male mule could impregnate the female ass, because the organs of generation seemed so perfect; but Dr. Goldsmith very shrewdly remarks, that there being no instance of its occurring since the death of Aristotle, he should think two thousand years quite sufficient to try the experiment and settle the question.

It has been ascertained, says Cuvier, that the female zebra may successively produce young with the horse and the ass; and here, too, is an exact agreement in the three essential particulars.

Another instance is that between the sheep and the goat. Here, likewise, we find the three essentials present; the organs of generation and the manner of copulation are the same, and they both go with young five months. Indeed so great is the resemblance between the sheep and the goat, that Cuvier says, speaking of the sheep, "they are so slightly entitled to a generic separation from the goat, that the two produce a prolific offspring, which, however, is again entirely lost in that of the sheep in two or three generations. Yet if we examine the goat and the sheep anatomically, we shall find their conformation entirely and minutely the same."

"No two animals," says the same author, "can be more alike than the stag and the fallow deer; alike in form, alike in disposition, in the superb furniture of their heads, in their swiftness, and alike also in their timidity; and yet no two animals keep themselves more distinct, or avoid each other with more fixed animosity. They are never seen to herd in the same place, they never engender together, and of course form no mixed breed. In short they both form distinct families, which though seemingly near are still remote; and although with the same habitudes, yet retain an unalterable aversion."—*Goldsmith's Natural History, Vol. II., p. 213.*

So between the roebuck and the deer, and the roebuck and the stag, while they resemble each other in many particulars, they are never known to engender together; and one of the reasons doubtless is, that while the deer and the stag go with young eight months, the roebuck goes only five and a half.

Upon the *dog*, the *wolf*, and the *fox* (three animals resembling each

other so closely, that Cuvier says a written generic and specific description of the one suits the rest, and if it were not for drawings and specimens, no just idea could be given of the differences between them)—upon these animals fruitless experiments have again and again been made to ascertain whether they would cohabit promiscuously with each other. The organs of generation are alike in all three, and the manner of copulation is the same likewise; but a difference exists between them in the period they go with young. The fox goes six weeks, the dog nine, and the wolf fourteen. This is doubtless the great barrier, which, together with the almost irreconcilable hatred subsisting among them towards each other, the wise Creator has set up to prevent their promiscuous union. If so, we may safely predict that every succeeding experiment will be alike unsuccessful. No naturalist labored more perseveringly in this field than the elegant and indefatigable Buffon. He procured pups of the wolf and the dog when they were under a fortnight old, he brought them up together in a large retired enclosure, suffered no individual to molest them, and none to visit them but their keeper; and although the wolf, which was the female, was regularly in heat at the season, no kind of sexual intercourse was ever observed between them; and although the experiment lasted three years, and every regulation was adopted calculated to favor the end proposed, the result was the same as in all preceding experiments, having the same end in view.

Equally unsuccessful, too, have been the experiments of those physiologists who injected with a common syringe the sperm of one species into the uterus of another species; while the experiment has often been successful of injecting with a common syringe the sperm of the male into the uterus of the female of the same species, the female thus becoming pregnant and bringing forth her young in the due course of nature. I am aware of the reports of early travellers in this country asserting, upon the authority of others, that the Indians had succeeded in causing a promiscuous intercourse between their dogs and the wolves; but neither Goldsmith nor Buffon put any confidence in these vague reports, especially as they are contradicted by so much that is actually known.

The question to which I have been requested to prepare an extended answer, is, whether, in my opinion, a woman can under any circumstances become impregnated by a dog and bring forth pups, or any other issue, as the result of such unnatural intercourse. I answer, that if the preceding observations are founded in fact, it is utterly impossible. If animals agreeing in almost every necessary particular of habit and structure do not possess the requisite power, it cannot be expected in those who differ so widely as man and dog. They differ totally in those three essential particulars of which I have before spoken; the organs of generation, the manner of copulation, and the period of gestation.

The difference between them in the organs of generation is very great. Without being very particular, I would notice, that man is provided with one appendage to the organs of generation, which if he loses by excision or wants by nature, he is almost as impotent as an eunuch, and scarcely possesses the power to propagate his own species; indeed some authors

are of opinion that the loss of it entirely deprives the individual of the procreative power. I allude to the seed-bladder, called by anatomists the *vesiculae seminales*. This appendage is entirely wanting in the dog. It is not peculiar to our species; some animals, as the goat, the ram, &c. have it much more largely developed than man. While physiologists are not agreed as to every use of this little appendage, none doubt that one very important office is forcibly to contract upon its fluid contents, and assist in injecting the sperm into the uterus of the female at the moment the local excitement has been raised to the highest pitch. Blumenbach still thinks, notwithstanding the strictures of the great John Hunter to the contrary, that it is to the testicle what the gall-bladder is to the liver. Animals in which it is not found are usually very long in the act of copulation, and they have not the power to *propel* the sperm into the uterus of the female, as all animals have which are furnished with *vesiculae seminales*; but to compensate for this want of power in the male, we find the female of their species provided with a strong sphincter, or grasping muscle, at the outer parts of the organs of generation, which during the excitement of coition grasps with prodigious, unrelenting force the penis of the male, until by simple compression of parts she extracts sperm sufficient to satisfy her desires, and without which contrivance he could never propagate his species. This is the case with the bear, the opossum, the jackall, the fox, the dog, &c. &c. Those animals, on the contrary, which are provided with a large seed-bladder, are usually very quick in the operation. Witness the sheep, the goat, the bull, &c.

The dog is also supplied with a double pair of glans, one pair at the extremity of the penis, and a second and much larger pair attached around the body of the penis, around which the sphincter of the female clings with a sort of spasmotic contraction, entirely independent of her will. The penis of the dog is provided with a tubular bone, which extends to the extremity of the penis, and which is supposed to compensate for the want of blood cells furnished to most others of his class, and all these parts are deemed essential to the secretion and ejection of his sperm.

The two species differ as widely in the construction of the uterus, and these differences, to say nothing of one being uniparous, or bearing one at a birth, and the other multiparous, or bearing many at a birth, are sufficient to make a great difference in the manner of copulation. In our own species it is a muscular propulsion of the sperm by the male, almost entirely unassisted, into the uterus of the female. In the dog, on the contrary, it is a kind of muscular secretion, or mechanical compression, produced entirely by the contraction of the female organs, excited to their highest degree by the presence of the male. In the one, the male is the active agent in making the deposite, while the female remains nearly passive; in the other the male remains almost entirely passive, while the female is the active agent.

If therefore it be true, as I think I have made it abundantly appear, that a certain essential power be wanting in both individuals, a power without which impregnation is impossible, even admitting all other things

to favor the opposite result, does it not approach very nearly to a demonstration, that the object contemplated can never be effected? But if these differences of structure are not sufficient to prove my position, there is the very wide difference between the two individuals in the period of gestation; while in one it is forty weeks, in the other it is only nine.

The only animal which possesses the least shadow of a possibility of ever being able to impregnate the female of our own species, besides her own appropriate lord, would seem to be the ourang-outang of Borneo and the East. But even here there are erected two very important barriers, over which it would seem impossible ever to pass. While there is no material difference in either the arrangement and structure of the organs of generation, or the manner of copulation, there is a difference of two months in the period of gestation, the ourang-outang going but seven months. The other impediment to which I allude, is the entire absence in the ourang-outang of that peculiar monthly secretion which makes woman differ from every other female in the long catalogue of beings; a secretion which must take place before she can possess the power of becoming pregnant, and which robs her of this power whenever age or disease deprives her of its regular healthy discharge: a peculiarity which may have been intended to guard her offspring from beastly contamination, from brutal depreciation—the very odor of which secretion is said to be abhorrent to every animal in the world.

Cuvier mentions, that the ourang-outang, like the horse, the deer, the elephant, &c., roam in droves through the forests and deserts; that the male of the ourang-outang is very fond of cohabiting with the negress, which they capture on the coast, while he is deadly in his hatred to negroes and white men. He affirms that instances are by no means uncommon, where they carry the young females into captivity and detain them for several years, and constantly treat them with the greatest attention and apparent kindness, preferring cohabitation with them to that with their own females, and yet no instances are recorded of any issue whatsoever being the result of such congress.

In the hybridous productions of which we have spoken, there is always a striking resemblance to both parents. In size the mule is between the horse and the ass. It is faster on foot than the ass, but less so than the horse. It has less patience than the ass, but much more than the horse, &c. &c. Now may we not without any breach of charity suppose, that every generation of our race, from Adam downwards, has produced individuals sufficiently abandoned to every sense of shame and every feeling of chastity, often to try the unnatural experiment of cohabiting with the dog. Nay, knowing as we do the depravity and degradation of a vast number of our race, have we not at least presumptive evidence that the experiment which we are now contemplating has again and again been tried in every age of the world, to satiate a beastly, lustful desire; but who has ever seen the hybridous, the monstrous production? Who in all his reading and researches, including both ancient and modern authors; who has ever discovered the record of one well-

authenticated instance of a being half man half dog? There may have been heard here and there an occasional vague report of such a phenomenon floating around upon the breath of slander, like the one which has subpœnaed me before this court to-day as a witness. Instead, however, of merely the report, the fabricated report of such cases being of extreme rarity, ought we not, supposing the congress of dog and woman capable of producing offspring, to see thousands and tens of thousands of these imaginary, growling, barking, yelping monsters, stalking before us at every step we take? But no! no!! never! never!! The all-wise Creator has raised his own peculiar barriers to such designs, which all the lasciviousness and baseness and profligacy and degradation of our species, assisted by hell's infernal emissaries, can never surmount.

These are some at least of the reasons which influence me in the opinion already expressed, that it is utterly impossible, under any circumstances whatsoever, for a woman to become pregnant by cohabiting with a dog, and bring forth any offspring as the result of such a connection; and much more the regular offspring of the dog. The thing to my mind is an utter impossibility, unless the immutable laws of nature can be supposed to change.

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#### MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS AND LICENSES IN CUBA.

[THE following interesting letter was addressed to Professor W. Parker, of New York, by a former pupil of his, now practising medicine in Havana, and has been politely forwarded to us by Prof. P. As it was not apparently written for publication, we withhold the name of the writer.]

Havana, April 25, 1844.

DEAR SIR.—Thinking that it may be of some interest to you to know the course of the medical examination to which foreign physicians are subjected before they can legally practise on this island, I have thought that I would give you the particulars of the late formalities and examinations through which I have passed at the Royal University of this city.

In the first place, I would say, that in commencing this undertaking, the candidate should provide himself with an almost inexhaustible stock of PATIENCE; for the annoyances, formalities and vexatious delays with which he will meet, will very soon drain anything like a moderate supply of that most necessary and useful attribute of mind. I arrived here from Trinidad on the 7th of March, and it was not until the 12th of April that with all my efforts I could get a day named for my examination. It is true that the occurrence of the *Semana Santa*, or Holy Week, and a number of other holydays, occasioned a loss of time that perhaps might not have otherwise taken place. But holydays or no holydays, there will be detention and constant delay; poco à poco, mañana, mañana—little by little, to-morrow, and to-morrow, is, I may say, the unvarying course of Spanish tribunals. Many a valuable “to-morrow” and “day after to-morrow” comes and goes, and to your grief and

cost do you find that your business is no nearer to a conclusion than before, but remains quite *in statu quo*.

The first thing to be done, if the individual has not already done it, is to take out a *carta de domicilio*, giving him authority to remain in the island and establish himself where he may choose in the practice of his profession. This requires about three days, and costs, if one understands the language and can manage the matter for himself, four dollars and a half; if he is obliged to hire another to do it for him, it will cost him a couple more. Next he must make a petition in due form to the President of the Subinspection of Studies, who is the Captain General himself, praying that his Excellency will deign to give the necessary order to the end that he may be legally qualified for the exercise of his profession upon this island. This petition must be handed to the Secretary of the Subinspection of Studies, and be laid before the Junta or Medical Council before it can be acted upon. This grave body meets but once a week, on Wednesday evening, and I suppose no earthly consideration would make them meet any oftener. The *carta de domicilio* and the diploma of the candidate must be also laid before the Junta, the latter being previously certified by the American Consul, which costs two dollars. The Junta meet, and the papers being laid before them in due form, they order that the candidate proceed to take the necessary steps for the attainment of his object. After, perhaps, a couple of weeks, and sometimes double and treble that number, the candidate is ordered to prove his identity in the office of the Secretary of the Subinspection of Studies. That is, to prove by three good witnesses that he is the individual spoken of in the diploma, and no other; to prove, as a gentleman who went as witness with me facetiously remarked, *quē usted es usted*—that *you are you*. Your witnesses must be natives of your own country, American citizens, known and established in this city, and must have been acquainted with you at least for some considerable time. They are examined separately, and a clerk formally takes down the deposition of each one in writing. After all this ceremony is finished, the Secretary of the Subinspection of Studies writes an official letter to the Rector of the University, stating that having gone through all the necessary formalities in his office, he now sends you to undergo the requisite examinations at the Royal University. And here begins somewhat deeply *la función del dinero*, the play of the money, which is anything but amusing to the person that has it to pay. The *derechos* or fees at this office are twenty dollars. I paid my money, took the official despatch, and repaired immediately to the University, where I delivered it in the Secretary's office, and by insisting somewhat I at last obtained the appointment of the next day, the 13th of April, at 1 o'clock, P. M., for my first examination. The Rector appoints three examiners from among the professors of the University, and the Subinspection of Studies sends one as a delegate from their body. On the day of the first examination, previous to that act, I had to make the following heavy deposits, viz., one hundred and twenty-five dollars paid into the Treasury of the University, and one hundred and twenty-five dollars paid into the hands of the Beadle to be distributed by

him among the examiners, for both of which sum receipts were given me which I had to deliver to the Secretary before entering the hall of examination.

At last the hour arrived, and my cane being duly taken from me at the door by one of the porters, and duly placed in the corner with the other gold-headed, wise-looking, doctoral canes, I was ushered by the Beadle into the august presence of my dignified examiners. The Beadle is an exceedingly important and busy personage on these occasions ; he is master of ceremonies, ushers you in and out, and sits by your side during the whole of the examination, and is in fact a sort of body-guard or constable to see that you do not infringe any of those sacred rules of etiquette and formality in the observance of which the Spaniards have ever been so excessively punctilious. None but a black dress, I was duly informed beforehand by the illustrious Beadle, would be considered *de etiqueta* ; so I took care to go diplomatically arrayed—*vestido de negro* from head to foot. The room for examination is a large and very stately one, hung with crimson, and at the end opposite the door of entrance is the stage or pulpit for the Rector, over which hangs a portrait of the young Queen of Spain. A row of permanent arm-chairs for the examiners extends from each side of the pulpit towards the door, and at the end of these, between the two rows, is a table and seat covered with red cloth, and upon this the poor wight of a candidate is placed, as a fair target to be shot at from both sides, without even a back or a side to his seat, or a single object to conceal his bashfulness or mortification should some unlucky missile but too sorely wound him.

I had been seated but a few moments when the Reverend Rector, attired in full canonicals, black surplice and gown, lace cuffs and collar, entered and took his chair of state. My watchful guardian, the Beadle, ordered me to rise as he passed, and on my attempting, without further honors, to sit down again, he told me not to sit down until his lordship, *Su Usia*, was seated. When the very Reverend Senior was comfortably composed in his seat, the Dean of the Faculty, Dr. C. V., rang a little bell and called for *los expedientes*, that is, the different papers showing that I had duly taken all the legal steps and formalities *conforme á lo despuesto*, to arrive at the surely not enviable position I was then occupying. Probably the most important of these *expedientes* were the receipts showing that the two hundred and fifty dollars were safe in the coffers of the University, and in the important hands of the punctilious Beadle. I confess that at the first examination all this formality, dignity, ceremony and etiquette, quite surprised and confounded me. Unlike, also, our strictly private examinations, these are free to the public, and a number of the students of the University were present, the door of the hall being wide open. The Beadle, too, lost no occasion of scrupulously demonstrating the importance of his functions ; in the course of the examination, noticing that I used, in replying to the professors, the word *usted*, you—the usual very respectful mode of address among Spaniards, he whispered to me, in a low voice, and told me that I must there use the word *usia*, your honor, your lordship. I felt at that moment little in-

clined to use compliments with anybody. The noise, too, from the street, through the open door, was sometimes almost deafening, and I seated at such a formal distance from my examiners that I several times could not hear their questions at all. However, the hour terminated, as all hours will, but to me it was an excessively long and disagreeable one. It tends, also, not a little to increase your discomfort, to know that the hundred and twenty-five dollars paid to the examiners will be *entirely lost* in case they reject you; for if they give you another trial some months after, which they sometimes do, *their* fee has to be paid over again in full amount, as anything less than that sum is not considered a compensation for the privilege of being screwed!

The matters touched upon in the examination were of much the same nature as at our colleges, but they were discussed with much more length and minuteness. They examine on everything pertaining to medicine and surgery, except chemistry—anatomy and physiology, theory and practice of medicine, clinical medicine and surgery, *materia medica*, surgical diseases and operations, obstetrics, and all matters, which are various, that come under the head of medical jurisprudence. Dr. C. V. is the professor of medical jurisprudence, and one of the most accomplished and intelligent professors of the University. I would cheerfully add, too, that he was decidedly the most affable, fair and considerate of my examiners, and this has generally been the experience of all the candidates when he has been one of the Board. A kind look, and a candid, assuring manner in the professor examining, has a wonderful effect to soothe and animate the timid, agitated pupil. This pleasant manner Dr. C. V. most eminently possesses, which cannot be said by any means of all the rest.

The next trial was appointed for the day but one after, Monday, the 15th inst., at half past 4 o'clock, P. M., at the Hospital de San Juan de Dios, where, at the appointed hour, I met the professors, and after examining the medical case which they gave me, we all adjourned to the University, and I there passed another *examen* of nearly an hour. The diagnosis of the case which they gave me was very easy, for it was a young man covered from head to foot with the smallpox, some of the pustules being now in the drying stage. They examined me minutely on the nature and treatment of this disease, and on contagion and infection in general, and took another wide ramble over all the branches of medicine and surgery.

The third and last examination was appointed for the following A. M., at 7 o'clock, to meet the professors again at St. John's Hospital, and be given a surgical case to examine and be examined upon; and also, should there be a recent subject, to perform some operations upon the dead body. There was no *cadáver* that morning, which circumstance I did not at all regret. They showed me a boy with congenital hare-lip, and a case of fracture of the patella, and after examining these and walking around the Hospital, we went again to the University, where I had a minute examination of thirty-five minutes upon the cases I had seen, and upon a variety of other subjects besides. In the second and third exa-

minations, having recovered my confidence and become somewhat accustomed to their formal mode of procedure, I succeeded much better than in the first.

The last examination being concluded, I was ushered out by Monsieur le Beadle, the door was shut, and the professors went into conclave. In about three minutes the Beadle came out and informed me that I was approved—*ustedé está aprobado*, which were indeed cheering words after all the harassing formalities and delays, and the ordeal of three rigid examinations, through which I had passed. At the conclusion, I was required to take an oath of fidelity to the Queen of Spain, and obedience to the Spanish laws while I remain upon the island. This was read to me by the Dean of the Faculty, Dr. C. V., standing upon the stage, and here again el Señor Beadle, untiring in his zeal for forms, motioned to me to fall upon my knees while the oath was being read, but the worthy Dean, with great consideration, interrupted the important official, and told me it was not necessary.

On receiving the diploma or *titulo* which they give, you have to pay another twenty dollars into the Treasury of the University; making, with the certification of your diploma, two hundred and ninety-two dollars. In the course of the proceedings you will have to use two or three sheets of stamped paper at half a dollar a sheet, and you will find also, that, notwithstanding the enormous sums which you have paid to the high functionaries, the lazy porters at the door will be most vexatiously teasing you for a fee—*alguna cosa para refrescar*. Another dollar to them, together with the letter of domiciliation, will make the whole expenses amount to very near three hundred dollars. Understanding the Spanish language, I did not have to employ an interpreter; if I had been obliged to do so, it would have been an additional expense of fifty dollars, as that is what an American physician now practising here informed me he had to pay.

A few years since, the examinations were a mere form, and almost dispensed with, the payment of five hundred dollars being by far the most important and essential formality. On this old regime I have been informed that numbers of persons quite unqualified bought licenses—apothecaries, barber-surgeons, &c. About two years since the fees were reduced (?) to their present rates, and the examinations commenced in good earnest, and in the month of March just passed the new regulations concerning physicians and surgeons, and all matters relating to them, have been published in a pamphlet form, of which every physician and surgeon is required to have a copy. Perhaps it would be interesting to you to know its title, and one or two of its more important articles. It is called “Reglamento de Medicina y Cirujía Formado por la Subinspección de Estudios de las Islas de Cuba y Puerto Rico y aprobado por Su Magestad en Real Orden de tres de Enero de 1844.” Chapter IV., article 14, says, “No persons can exercise in the Islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico the profession of Medicine and Surgery, nor the branches of Dentist, Bleeder and Midwife, without having the corresponding title given to them by the competent authority.” Article 15—“Those who,

without a legal title, shall exercise any branch of the healing art, or shall exceed the faculties which their title concedes to them, shall be fined, the competent summary information having been previously given by the local judge, in the sum of one hundred dollars for the first offence, and in default of payment one month's imprisonment; for the second offence, two hundred dollars or two months' imprisonment; and for the third offence, three hundred dollars or three months' imprisonment; with the right, besides, in either of the three cases, in the event of any disastrous result from the illegal practice, to prosecute according to law for the purpose of condign punishment." Article 17 says—"In the same manner foreign physicians must present to the Subinspection of Studies their respective titles, legalized in due form, and prove also the identity of their persons; but this tribunal can in no case license them to practice, except there take place, before the Board of the respective faculty, the proof-examinations and practical exercises prescribed in the 100th article of the general Plan of Studies, and the deposit which is spoken of in the 123d article of the Regulations of the University." So you see that quacks have no chance of success *here*, and the door is narrow and the way difficult and expensive for even regular practitioners of any nation whatever.

I close with something of the same advice as that with which I commenced, to any professional brother about to undertake this arduous enterprise: "Go doubly armed with *patience and money*, for both the one and the other will meet with heavy draughts; and go well prepared for the examination, for a rigid and severe one you may be sure of receiving."

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#### THE UNPARALLELED CASE.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR.—It is possible that my former communication, which you did me the honor to publish, may have led to the supposition that there existed some personal ill feeling between Professor Bedford and the writer. Now nothing can be farther from truth than such a conclusion. It is doubtful whether the professor ever even heard of my humble self. And as to my knowledge of him, it was confined to the announcement of his being appointed to the professorship of midwifery, &c., in the University of New York, with a notice of his preparations, illustrative of the department of obstetrics, which impressed me favorably; and I thought that the next time I visited that city I might give the professor a call in order to view them. So much by way of introduction.

Now as to the professor's note on Chailly's Midwifery, to which I alluded in my former communication—that a *physician* was called to a woman who supposed herself in travail, and that this physician (who, it appears, had a few months notice that he was thus to be called) said, after making an examination, "that all was right, that the labor was quite advanced, and in a very short time would be completed"—when at the same time, the woman (as appears by the professor's note) was not pregnant, and never had been, that all was *wind*, and that the whole

labor ended in its evacuation—I say that this account struck me as the most astonishing and incredible of anything which I had ever seen in medical annals, ancient or modern, foreign or domestic. Had the professor stated that an impostor, an empiric, a nostrum-vender, a quack, a fool, or an idiot, had been present at this unheard-of *accouchement*, I might have passed his statement in silence. But none of this class is mentioned—it is a *physician*. And who or what is a physician? Let our great lexicographer, Dr. Webster, decide, who says he is “A person skilled in the art of healing; one whose profession is to prescribe remedies for diseases.” That any person, male or female, who had ever made an examination of a parturient woman, or even ever read a single treatise upon Midwifery, should have proclaimed such a diagnostic and prognostic at this physician is said to have done, may be very comprehensible to some, but I must confess is very incomprehensible to me.

But, Mr. Editor, a writer in your Journal, who signs himself “Cyclops,” says that “every experienced practitioner could relate a hundred equally culpable examples which he has detected,” &c. Indeed! I believe, Sir, that the number of physicians in Boston is estimated at 200, and in New York at 400. Now we will suppose that one half in each city are “experienced,” and that will make 300 experienced physicians in those two cities alone, without reckoning any for Philadelphia, Baltimore, &c. &c. If each of these has one hundred “equally culpable examples” to relate, it would make the round number of 30,000 cases. If you, Mr. Editor, can bring out a tithe of these for publication, pray double, triple, quadruple your very interesting Journal, contrive to bring them into requisition, and let us have them. And I will venture to predict, that if your utmost ambition is not already satisfied with the circulation of the Journal (which is, as I believe, now such as to be very satisfactory), the consequent great increase of new subscribers will soon cause it to become so.

I have imbibed the idea that in no country in the world is education so universally diffused among the mass of our population, as in our own; and that the three professions no where else afford so many shining characters as here; although there may be some one or two individuals abroad, in each of the professions, whose superior opportunities have placed him or them upon an over-looking eminence. I was much pleased with the article in your No. for July 31, 1844, entitled “*Medical Literature of the West*,” and am of opinion that you have not overrated your subject. When attending the Medical Lectures in Philadelphia, there were about 400 of us who daily assembled in the University of Pennsylvania to listen to the different professors. Among them, no brighter star engaged my attention than one from the *West*; and since his return to his native region, his advancement has not disappointed my expectations. His name is familiar to medical men throughout the United States. In New York and the New England States, the number of the medical schools; the number and excellence of the different professors; the urbanity, intelligence, and superior acquirements of the mass of practitioners in city and country, would, I think, be noticed by any medical visiter from abroad, who was

himself a man of acumen and observation. Yet, Mr. Editor, according to your correspondent Cyclops, the number of blunders—and of such before unheard-of blunders as Professor Bedford points out—would exceed the whole number of physicians, professors and practitioners in the North, South, East and West of the United States, a hundred fold. What a parcel of outre beings will we be reckoned, when your No. containing Cyclops's communication reaches Europe! Every man, it is said, is born for something. Cyclops seems to have found out his special province—the defence of a case, and assertion of the common occurrence of similar cases—in which air pent up in the bowels of a female, and wind issuing therefrom, were mistaken for pregnancy, travail and delivery! The person thus deceived is said to be a *physician*; nor is there any designation to distinguish him from other physicians. The imputation, therefore, falls on the medical faculty as a body, and I see no other way for the readers of the note in question to be disabused, than to give up the name of the person referred to, or so to point him out as to prevent foreigners who come among us from viewing us all as reduced to the same level, and each physician who may cross the Atlantic from being pointed at as the very man. As for myself, individually, I have nothing at stake, any more than any one and every one else—the honor of the profession and its professors. To the heads that *guide* our *guides*, we are to look for everything praiseworthy, decent, ennobling to their department, and ornamental to their country. "The raging Cyclops,"\* for aught that appears, did not wait, like Falstaff, to be thrust down upon this case, but thrust himself down upon it. This monocular gentleman it would be difficult to make out to be a physician by his written article. Were not the situation of affairs precisely as it is, we should strongly suspect that the case had somehow gotten out of medical hands into those of the legal profession, and that the communication, signed *Cyclops*, was in reality written by one of that sect of lawyers denominated *pettifoggers*. We wish to possess more deference than to advise, where such an act is a breach of good manners, unasked for, and might be considered insolent. Otherwise we might say to him that an acquaintance with the works of Dr. Syntax would be a good remedy in his malady, to which Seneca's morals might be added.

I was, Mr. Editor, about to follow the example of Cyclops in one respect; that is, as he has whispered in my ear, I was about to whisper in yours. But recollecting what one of the fair observed in my younger years, that, *where there was whispering, there was always lying*; and what the wise man saith, that *a whisperer separateth chief friends*; also, that the Apostle places *whisperers* with *backbiters*, and other criminals of the deepest dye, I concluded not. I will therefore speak aloud, and say to you, Sir, that as the last five lines of Cyclops's correspondence with you are in fact an advertisement, in which he announces a new edition of Professor Bedford's work, and where it may be found, with the usual statement of *great sales*, it would be no more than justice

\* See Milton's Style Imitated, by Mr. Addison.

to yourself, and equitable to your advertising patrons, to tax him the same amount as your other advertisers.

Since Cyclops has named himself after a ferocious people, who had but one eye, he may still boast of being better off than the totally blind. And such he may *lead* (if he can find those so utterly deprived of vision as to follow him); but not

ARGUS.

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### INFLUENCE OF SMOKING IN PROMOTING DEFÆCATION.

[Communicated for the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*.]

Most persons are experimentally aware of the influence which smoking exerts upon the alimentary canal in inducing a speedy evacuation of a portion of its contents. Many, indeed, are in the habit of constantly practising it for that purpose, as a substitute for less pleasant medicines.

Let an individual smoke half a cigar in the morning, soon after breakfast, and almost before he has finished, he will feel an urgent desire for an alvine dejection. How is this effect produced? The operation is not such as is produced by a cathartic. It is entirely unaccompanied by pain—and the discharge itself is not loose in its character. Neither is it out of the power of the individual to prevent the dejection. Should he resist the call, or be occupied in such a way as to neglect it, the sensation passes away and does not return until after the same means have been again employed.

Smoking would seem to act as an excitant upon the intestinal canal, producing an acceleration of its peristaltic motions. But how or in what manner this effect is produced, is not very apparent. One circumstance, however, is worthy of remark, and that is the quickness with which the effect takes place.

Tobacco inhaled in the form of smoke is commonly supposed to exert a narcotic agency, and we should suppose that its influence would be rather to allay than to excite action in the intestines. The long-continued practice of smoking, indeed, is said to produce a torpor of the bowels, and habitual constipation. Of the truth of this, however, there certainly may be doubts entertained.

Account for the influence of smoking in promoting an evacuation as we may, or account for it not at all, the fact is certain—and I know of no better way of producing a regular morning evacuation than resorting to this process. Many individuals cling to the habit alone on this account; and when for a time they relinquish it, are troubled with costiveness which requires the aid of cathartics to subdue.

Such individuals will not be very ready to accord their assent to the sweeping anathema of King James, who denounces their favorite habit as a custom "loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the braine, dangerous to the lungs; and in the black [King James could not have seen very good tobacco-smoke] stinking fume thereof, nearest resembling the horrible stygian smoke of the pit that is bottomless."

B. B. A.

## THE BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, AUGUST 21, 1844.

*Boylston Medical Prizes.*—It will be seen by a reference to the third page of our advertisements, that the Committee on the subject of awarding the Boylston Prizes, have given one to Dr. Samuel Forry, of New York, favorably known to the public by an excellent work upon the Climate of the United States, and as editor of the New York Journal of Medicine; and the other to Dr. Henry J. Bigelow, of Boston.

The subject of Dr. Bigelow's essay is one of great interest to the medical profession, and we trust he may be prevailed upon to give us an opportunity to lay some portion of it, at least, before our readers.

*Error in Diagnosis—Enlargement of the Abdomen without Pregnancy.*—Dr. G. O. Heming relates the following case in the London Lancet. It is copied on account of its similarity to one lately published by Professor Bedford, of New York, and which has been the cause of a little sharp shooting between two of our respected correspondents.

"In the winter of 1842 a respectable tradesman called upon me, and wished me to go with him to see his wife, about 43 years of age, who, he said, was in labor, and the medical gentleman who was attending her had not left the house for two whole days and nights. Upon talking with the *practitioner* who was attending her, he told me that he had felt the head at first, but that now he could not tell what part presented. I made an examination, and we then went into another room, and I told him that she was not only *not* in labor, but that she was not pregnant, and time proved this opinion to have been correct. She said that she thought herself pregnant, because her stomach and her bosom had lately become greatly enlarged, and she, too, thought she had frequently felt the child, and had been irregular in her monthly periods."

*Opening the Abdomen in a Case of Colic.*—Dr. Ford, of Nashville, Tenn., was called to a colored boy, recently, whose sufferings were extreme from colic. No relief was afforded by any medicine resorted to. The case was becoming worse and worse, and Dr. Ford, foreseeing the immediate death of the patient unless some speedy exit was given to the wind with which the bowels were distended, boldly cut into the cavity of the abdomen, drew up an inflated portion of the intestine, and punctured it. The boy was instantly freed from pain. When the whole volume of pent-up air had escaped, he replaced the parts, dressed the external wound, and left the work to be completed by nature. On the second day, we are informed, there was a regular evacuation of faeces. No bad symptoms followed, the child was rapidly recovering, and by this time, it is presumed, is perfectly restored to health. An exact statement of the particulars, from the ingenious operator himself, is preparing for the Journal.

*Therapeutic Agency of Mesmerism.*—Mention is made in a New Orleans paper of a young lady, who, during the mesmeric sleep, had a tooth extracted, without being conscious of any pain. The fact was very astonishing, till it was subsequently ascertained that she had had *sixty*, *two extracted* before public audiences, to illustrate the wonderful effects of the new science!—A New York paper furnishes the following narration, which is of the same character.

“A mesmerizer at Newark asserted in a public lecture that a man's arm had been successfully amputated at the New York Hospital, while in a state of magnetic sleep, and that a girl had been cured of St. Vitus's dance by a similar application of mesmerism. A student of medicine took the pains to make personal inquiry into the matter. He says, in the Newark Advertiser: ‘We visited the Hospital, and ascertained from the medical officers that a number of manipulations had been performed without the least effect in a single instance! The man with a bad arm (who by the way, was *not* in robust health) after enduring the solemn nonsense for half an hour, laughed at his scientific friend, and wished an immediate operation, which he bore as unflinchingly as though magnetized. Dr. S., an attending physician to the institution, and of distinguished reputation, averred that the little girl was under his own care, that the magnetizer had every facility he required, and that after his failure, he was allowed to choose *any subject* in the ward. By agreement he was to call the next day at 11, A. M., a time which, unfortunately, never came, or else he concluded to forget his engagement.’ We imagine most of the miraculous cures, announced by the mesmerizers, have no better foundation than this.”

*Singular Condition of the Nervous System.*—A son of Mr. Lewis W. Link, of Green Co., Illinois, nine years of age, was slightly injured six weeks ago, under the right ear, by a cow's horn, which made a wound an inch and a half long. A palsy of the opposite side of the body was discovered the next morning. Although the wound healed readily, the paralysis still remains, but modified in the following singular manner. While sleeping, the lad raises the left hand to his face, moves the fingers, flexes the arm, &c., but the moment he is fairly awake there is a total loss of all voluntary power over the arm of that side. The father has consulted several physicians of distinguished reputation, without having obtained any immediate benefit for the unfortunate child. At present, the douche promises quite as much as any other treatment that has been suggested. A question arises, which we shall be gratified to have answered—how is this condition of the nervous system to be explained? Why can the arm or leg be moved freely in sleep, and not when the boy is consciously awake?

*Criminal Attempt at Abortion.*—A woman died last week at the House of Industry, in consequence of an attempt made by a noted quack in this city to procure an abortion. Shortly before her death she made a deposition, stating what had been done, and mentioning the name of the quack. A coroner's inquest was held upon her body at the House of Industry, and the verdict was that the deceased died in consequence of drugs administered by Martin L. Peters, for the purpose of procuring an

abortion. The drug was given under the name of "French Renovating Pills." A warrant has been issued for Peters's arrest, but, as might be expected, the return has been *non est inventus*.

*Prophylactic Remedy against Ptyalism.*—Dr. Schoepf, Professor of the University of Pesth, recommends the following tooth-powder, while administering mercury, in order to prevent salivation taking place. R. Pulv. alumin. exsiccat. 9 ij.; pulv. cinchon. 3 j. m. To be employed by means of a soft brush morning and evening.

*Medical Miscellany.*—A fatal case of empirical treatment lately took place in Wurtsboro' (N. Y. we suppose), an infusion of tobacco and the entrails of some animal having been, it is said, the active agents in the hands of the quack, whose name was John Hollister.—A writer in the Boston Mercantile Journal relates a case of paralysis of the left arm, which was suddenly cured while the patient was sleeping an hour on the sandy beach at Ipswich, with the paralytic arm covered up with sand in an excavation made for the purpose. Whether the heat or the salt of the sand, or neither, produced the cure, is of course unknown.—The number of deaths week before last, in New York, was 216, the week previous 185. As in Boston and other cities, the excess of mortality is mostly among children. In Philadelphia, the same week, the number was 91.—The health of St. Louis is said to be already much affected by the subsidence of the waters after the late destructive floods.—The very common occurrence of the death of a child by an overdose of paregoric, took place last week in New York.—We learn that the number of students at the Berkshire Medical Institution, where the lectures commenced the beginning of August, is already 142—an unusual large number.—An apothecary in Chelsea, the other day, very considerately gave a suspicious-looking man half an ounce of cream of tartar, instead of arsenic for which he asked. He soon swallowed it, and his life was probably saved by the apothecary's precaution.—The Harpers have in press, at New York, a work "On the Forces which produce the Organization of Plants," by Dr. J. W. Draper, the able Professor of Chemistry in the University of New York.—A Medical Journal is advertised for sale in the London Times of July 31—supposed to be the "Lancet" of that city.

**BOOKS RECEIVED.**—Cyclopaedia of Practical Medicine, Part X.—Druitt's Modern Surgery, Ed. 1844. Both from Lea & Blanchard.

**To CORRESPONDENTS.**—An obituary notice of the late Dr. Benjamin Page, of Hallowell, Me., has been received.—The announcement, by "Surgicus," of a suit for mal-practice in New York State, cannot receive further notice without better evidence of its truth than his anonymous signature.—"Justice," in his remarks on the "newspaper advertisement" by a physician, alluded to a short time ago in the Journal, is undoubtedly right in his views of the matter, but any further editorial action respecting it must be deferred a few weeks longer.

**Number of deaths in Boston for the week ending Aug. 17, 47.—Males, 23; Females, 24. Stillborn, 2.**  
Of consumption, 4—cholera infantum, 8—teething, 4—burn, 1—dropy in the brain, 4—diarrhoea, 1—scarlet fever, 3—congestion of the lungs, 1—canker, 1—lung fever, 1—fits, 1—palsy, 1—bowel complaint, 3—spasms, 1—cancer, 1—child-bed, 2—old age, 4—worms, 1—peritonitis, 1—inflammation of the bowels, 1—heart disease, 1—infantile, 1—haemorrhage, 1.

Under 5 years, 29—between 5 and 20 years, 2—between 20 and 60 years, 11—over 60 years, 5.

*Creosote in the Treatment of certain Diseases of the Conjunctiva and Cornea.*—Dr. Tanesville first used this remedy in diseases of the eyes in 1836, in a case of opacity of the cornea, with ulceration resulting from scrofulous ophthalmia, which was from three to four years' standing. After failing with all the known means, he used a mercurial ointment, with which he incorporated a few drops of creosote, and introduced a small quantity of it between the eyelids evening and morning. This treatment was followed by rapid amelioration. The ulcers cicatrized gradually, the opacity disappeared, and in the space of two months the patient was cured. Dr. T. has since used it with the greatest success in many other cases of acute and chronic scrofulous ophthalmia. He says that he has applied it very usefully also as a topical remedy in several external scrofulous affections, ulcerations of the skin, &c., whence he concludes that it is an invaluable means in all local affections of scrofulous origin. He observes, however, that it should be employed conjointly with a suitable constitutional treatment. Simple cerate may be substituted for the mercurial ointment or fresh lard, and this is indispensable in cases where mercurial ointment cannot be borne by the patients. The use of creosote becomes more requisite in proportion as the disease is more chronic. Dr. H. Tanesville generally uses from ten to twenty drops of creosote to the ounce of ointment, but in protracted cases he exceeds this quantity. If the introduction of this ointment should produce too violent a smarting, it may be moderated by bathing the eye with fresh water or cold milk. One of the most important advantages of creosote, used as a caustic in scrofulous ulcerations of the cornea, is its facility of application. It is sufficient to introduce a small portion of the prepared ointment between the eyelids, and to rub the latter slightly against the globe of the eye, whereas touching the little ulcers themselves with the caustic is a matter of some difficulty in children.—This ointment is very efficacious also in curing inflammation of the Meibomian glands. It is also used with success in chronic vascular albigo, which is often the result of granular inflammation of the conjunctiva. In its simple form it is used only after the inflammatory symptoms have been removed by the ordinary antiphlogistics. In purulent ophthalmia it is employed conjointly with a general active treatment.—*London Medical Times, from Med. Gaz.*

*Treatment of Typhoid Fever.*—The results as to mortality in the hands of different practitioners have been very remarkable. At the Hotel Dieu, for example, in the service of M. Sandras, the mortality was one in seven; the treatment consisted almost exclusively in the exhibition of small doses of Seidlitz water by way of purgative. At the hospital Necker the deaths have been but one in twenty, and even one in thirty, if one patient be deducted who came to the house in a desperate condition. The treatment consisted in the employment of emeto-cathartics at the beginning, then purgatives (generally Seidlitz water), repeatedly to the end of the disease; finally, in the exhibition of mild tonics.—*Bulletin général de Thérapeutique.*

*Pills against Incontinence of Urine (Ribes).*—Eight grains of alcoholic extract of nux vomica, one drachm of black oxide of iron, mixed together, and made into three-grain pills. Mode of exhibition: three daily.—*London Medical Times.*